

Wakulla grad to compete at Miss Florida



Tia Unsell

See Page 5

The Wakulla Sun

"It's a New Day"



Weather forecast from Wakulla High School

| Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|--|--|
| | | |
| Mostly Sunny Hi: 93° Lo: 73° 20% Sunrise 6:35 AM Sunset 8:39 PM | Mostly Sunny Hi: 95° Lo: 74° 24% Sunrise 6:35 AM Sunset 8:40 PM | Mostly Sunny Hi: 95° Lo: 76° 36% Sunrise 6:35 AM Sunset 8:40 PM |

Locally Owned & Operated

Our 3rd Year 25th Issue
Thursday, June 20, 2024



\$1
One Section

Political races are set

Qualifying for candidates ended Friday setting up a number of contests; several candidates draw no opposition

By WILLIAM SNOWDEN
Editor

Candidate qualifying ended last Friday at noon, and for the first time in several election cycles there were no last-minute candidates jumping into local races.

A number of constitutional officers will be returned to office without opposition: Clerk of Courts Greg James, Supervisor of Elections Joe Morgan, and Tax Collector Lisa Craze.

Additionally, County Commissioner Ralph Thomas was returned to office without an opponent, and Josh Lawhon had no opposition for the county commission seat 5 held by Chuck Hess, who is retiring.

Local races that are contested include:

- Sheriff, with incumbent Jared Miller being challenged by Army Reyes;
- Property Appraiser, with incumbent Ed Brimmer being challenged by former Property Appraiser Donnie Sparkman;
- County commission seat 3 will see incumbent Mike Kemp challenged by Valerie Russell, a repeat of the election four years ago;

Local candidate forums set

The Wakulla Sun will hold candidate forums on Tuesday, July 9, at the public library beginning at 6 p.m. for candidates for sheriff, property appraiser and county commissioner.

On Tuesday, July 16, another forum will be held at the library be-

ginning at 6 p.m. for candidates for superintendent of schools and the school board.

Submit your questions for candidates to editor@thewakullasun.com.

The Sun also welcomes Letters to the Editor endorsing candidates, but will not run negative letters.



Clerk of Courts Greg James, Tax Collector Lisa Craze and Supervisor of Elections Joe Morgan are all returning to office without opposition.

- Three candidates are vying for Superintendent of Schools to re-

place Bobby Pearce, who is retiring: Rick Myhre, Matt Payne and Ricky Strickland.

- On school board, Angie Nichols and June Davis are vying for the seat held by Melisa Taylor, who is retiring;

- and incumbent school board member Josh Brown is being challenged by Camden Smit.

In other races, state Sen. Corey Simon, R-Tallahassee, whose district includes Wakulla, qualified for re-election, and drew Democratic challengers Daryl Parks, Kimblin Nesmith, and Sheria Griffin.

And incumbent state Rep. Jason Shoaf, R-St. Joe, is being challenged by Democrat Kenneth Beasley.

Other multi-county elected officials, including State Attorney Jack Campbell and Public Defender Jessica Yeary, who both serve in the Second Judicial Circuit which includes Wakulla, did not draw opponents and will return to office without facing election.

CITY COMMISSION RACES

Four of the five seats on the St. Marks City Commission are up: the

Turn to Page 9



DADS & STROLLERS

The Wakulla County Health Department held a Dads & Strollers event at Azalea Park on Saturday,

encouraging dads to come out and get information about parenting. Participants included, at left, Marquise Martin and daughter Nariah. (Photos by Gerald Brown)

Several Wakulla projects in state budget

Gov. DeSantis approves one fire station, but vetos money to relocate Shell Point fire station

By WILLIAM SNOWDEN
Editor

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis signed the state budget last week that included several Wakulla projects – including \$3.7 million to purchase the more than 200 acres where a controversial gas station had been proposed on a parcel that has an underground cave system linking Chip's Hole to Wakulla Springs.

Conservation Florida will purchase the land, which is at Bloxham Cutoff and U.S. Highway 319, and it will be preserved as conservation land – minus 7 acres to be traded to Southwest Georgia Oil to build a gas station across Bloxham Cutoff on what is viewed as less sensitive land.

Wakulla County was approved for \$2.1 million for a new St. Marks Fire Rescue Station, although the governor rejected funding for a new fire station to serve the Shell Point area, which would have moved that fire station to a location on higher ground that's not as vulnerable to coastal surge.

The county also received \$225,000 for an expansion of the community center – which is to be used to construct restroom and shower facilities for use in post-hurricane or other disaster scenarios. That particular project had been labeled by Florida Tax Watch as a budget turkey because it did not go through the usual budget process.

Other county projects that have received past funding and are moving forward include:

- A new Emergency Operations Center, since the county received \$3.25 million in 2023, and has received \$3 million in federal funding through the state, plus a \$1 million county match.

- A new library, to be constructed on land the county owns at the community center. In 2023, the county received \$800,000 for design and engineering, and has a \$3.9 million commitment from the state Department of Economic Opportunity to build a new library.

- In 2023, the state also budgeted Wakulla County to receive a Fire Rescue Engine for \$750,000 and Fire Bunker Gear for \$150,000.

Gov. DeSantis signed the budget on Wednesday, June 12.

CANDIDATE ANNOUNCEMENT

Ed Brimmer seeks re-election

Elected property appraiser four years ago, he's running for another term in office

By ED BRIMNER
Candidate

It is an honor to serve as your Wakulla County Property Appraiser and I am asking for your support for my re-election. I was elected in 2020 and took office on Jan 5, 2021. In my first campaign, I promised to improve our office to better serve citizens of Wakulla County and build a culture that follows the law and treats every citizen equally. I knew changes were needed when I ran; however, the change in leadership was more important than I realized.

The following changes were made to fulfill my promises:

- Insisted on professionalism, including customer service, dress, and punctuality.
- Changed internal purchasing procedures so no one person could autonomously approve expenditures, make purchases, and ap-



Ed Brimmer is running for re-election as property appraiser.

prove payments.

- Consolidated multiple bank accounts into one to simplify banking functions and improve transparency.
- Installed a state-of-the-art mass appraisal computer program to

improve accuracy and efficiency.

- Improved our public website to enhance our citizens' user experience and provide better access to data.
- Waived the requirement for an annual

The Wakulla Sun offers candidates the opportunity to announce their candidacy, and tell voters the issues that are important to them.

application for multiple exemptions including widows, blind persons, persons totally and permanently disabled, spouses of first responders who die in the line of duty, and others. This saved thousands of dollars in postal costs alone.

- Implemented a new process of annual Agricultural Classification renewals. A bulky, time-consuming, and expensive process was reformed and saves our citizens money and vastly improved accuracy.

- Replaced poorly maintained full-size vehicles with fuel-efficient mid-sized trucks.

- Renovated offices to improve employee morale and make better

Turn to Page 9

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 3295 Crawfordville Hwy.
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Jorie Simmons
 ARNP



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Human trafficking

The Survive and Thrive Advocacy Center partnered with Tallahassee Community College, Florida Department of

Health – Wakulla and Wakulla County Coalition for Youth for a Human Trafficking Community Conversation on Wednesday, June 12, at the TCC Wakulla Center. Debbie Kearney and Robin Hassler of STAC in a discussion with the more than 50 participants. (Photo by Lynda Kinsey)

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Toasttab.com/SanMarcosCrawfordville

Flower of the Week at Sopchoppy Depot Park Scarlet hibiscus

By LYNN ARTZ, DAVID RODDENBERRY, and SANDY TEDDER



In bloom, scarlet hibiscus (*Hibiscus coccineus*) is stunning. The large (4-8-inch diameter), brilliant red, funnel-shaped flowers have a showy central column of stamens and 5 slightly separated petals, suggesting a star shape. They attract hummingbirds, butterflies, and native bees, including one hibiscus specialist bee. Scarlet hibiscus is a larval host for gray hairstreak and painted lady butterflies and 2 checkered skippers. The cannabis-shaped leaves also feed the caterpillars of 4 moths including pearly wood nymph and Io moths. A profuse bloomer, this native perennial grows 3-8' tall and 2-3' wide in full sun in rich, wet to moist soil. Also called scarlet rosemallow, it is flowering now in the pond at Sopchoppy Depot Park. On June 22, the Wakulla Garden Club will offer scarlet hibiscus in pots at the county extension plant sale.

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WAKULLA COUNTY 1ST ANNUAL

A SALUTE TO OUR Veterans

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 Held at Wakulla Community Center
 Open to all Veterans and families
 At No Cost

 Featuring:
 Medical, Dental and Eye Care
 Veteran Services, Counseling,
 Financial Literacy and much more

Friday & Saturday
JUNE 21 & 22, 2024
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 WAKULLA COUNTY – A SALUTE TO OUR VETERANS

ASALUTETOOURVETERANS@GMAIL.COM

Wakulla County Tax Collectors Office
SPECIALTY TAGS
\$15 - \$30 additional to cost of tag.

Lisa Craze, CFC
 Wakulla County Tax Collector

Established in 2008.
 The primary funding source for Surfing's Evolution & Preservation Foundation is the Florida "Endless Summer" specialty license plate. The plate is one way to show support for the sport of surfing, as well as keeping Florida's beaches healthy and clean. So far, \$10,674,302.20 has been raised from sales of the Endless summer specialty license plate in Florida. The Foundation also supports Special Olympics Florida with its board sports programs, and a number of beach cleanup organizations, including local affiliates of Keep America Beautiful, which allows participation in annual events such as Earth Day and the International Coastal Cleanup.



The People's Choice 2024
 The Wakulla Sun
Readers' Choice Awards



Vote Now!

St. Marks selling old refinery site

By **LEGION TAYLOR**
Reporter

Clayton Sembler, President of CDS Manufacturing, the company looking into buying the old refinery site in St. Marks, was present at last week's St. Marks City Commission meeting to discuss the plans for the land they're in negotiations to buy.

Sembler said that while his company provides a variety of services and supplies dozens of products to different clients at their main site in Gretna, the site in St. Marks would only be producing three of those products.

He stated that the reason St. Marks was selected is so that the company can manufacture products and then sell them to buyers in places such as the Keys, by loading those products on a barge. Their current plant isn't close enough to the water to do this, and that access would open up a lot more business for his company.

Sembler also wanted to add that if any concerned citizen wants to take a tour of the current facility to see what exactly is coming to St. Marks, they should reach out

and contact him or the company vice president, and schedule a tour.

Sembler said that someone had recently trespassed onto CDS' manufacturing site, and had taken photos and video of the operations, which caused legal trouble due to the company's nondisclosure and confidentiality agreements that it has with many of its clients.

All city commissioners were present at the meeting on Thursday, June 13, including the newly appointed Tim Lawrence, who was appointed on May 15 to replace former Mayor Paul Shedd, who resigned from the city commission and filed a lawsuit against his fellow commissioners for defamation. (That lawsuit is still pending.)

In other matters:
• Shadrach Hines of St. Marks Waterfronts gave an update on plans for the Fourth of July celebration, noting that half of the necessary \$8,000 for fireworks had been raised.

Anyone who wishes to make a donation can go to Bo Lynn's in St. Marks to pick up a donation form.

• A resolution concerning the mutual aid agreement between the city and the state was drafted, due to a change in legislation at the state level which puts pressure on city governments to enter into mutual aid agreements with the state government, as opposed to just the county government.

This aid primarily would be needed in times of natural disasters, such as in the aftermath of a hurricane.

City commissioners were unsure of what the mutual side of the aid was, as St. Marks doesn't have much equipment that could be used in an emergency, meaning the city would likely be receiving much more aid than it could give.

And city commissioners also expressed concerns about the vague

language of the resolution as it didn't say whether or not the city would need to pay those who aided them back, or how it would change their current agreement with the county government.

Mayor Steve Remke asked City Manager Zoe Mansfield if she could get the representative who reached out about the agreement to be present at the next regular meeting, and Mansfield said she could.

• Mansfield also brought up that the city had recently run an ad in the paper looking for bids to change some of the water lines in the city, as some of them are old and use materials such as asbestos. She noted that the money to replace the lines is coming from a grant, and the city won't have to pay for the update.

ST. MARKS WATERLINE UPGRADE PROJECT # 50105342 NOTICE TO RECEIVE SEALED BIDS

The City of St. Marks will receive sealed bids from any qualified person, company or corporation interested in constructing the:

ST. MARKS WATERLINE UPGRADE

This project will include the replacement of approximately 5,000 linear feet of aging watermain, non-functional valves, and upgrades to fire hydrants.

Bid documents can be obtained at the St. Marks City Hall, 788 Port Leon Drive, St. Marks, FL 32355. The bid must conform to Section 287.133(3) Florida Statutes, on public entity crimes.

Completion date for this project will be 180 days from the date of the Notice to Proceed presented to the successful bidder.

Liquidated damages for failure to complete the project on the specified date will be set at \$200.00 per day.

A MANDATORY pre-bid meeting will be held on July 9, 2024 @ 10:00 AM (EST), at the City Manager's Office in the St. Marks City Hall, 788 Port Leon Drive, St. Marks, FL 32355. Any bidder interested in submitting a bid must attend this meeting.

Please indicate on the envelope that this is a sealed bid for the "ST. MARKS WATERLINE UPGRADE".

Bids will be received until 2:00 PM (EST) on July 31, 2024, at the City Manager's Office in the St. Marks City Hall, 788 Port Leon Drive, St. Marks, FL 32355, and will be opened and read aloud at 2:05 PM (EST). All questions shall be submitted via email to TBurch@dewberry.com by July 19, 2024, at 5:00 PM (EST).

The City of St. Marks reserves the right to waive informalities in any bid, to accept and/or reject any or all bids, and to accept the bid that in their judgment will be in the best interest of The City of St. Marks.

If you have any questions, please call Trevor Burch at (850) 674-3300 or email him at TBurch@Dewberry.com

RESPONSIBLE VENDOR DETERMINATION

Respondent is hereby notified that Section 287.05701, Florida Statutes, requires that the County may not request documentation of or consider a vendor's social, political, or ideological interests when determining if the vendor is a responsible vendor.

June 20, 2024

NOTICE OF RE-SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARING

The Wakulla County Board of County Commissioners will hold a Public Hearing on July 15, 2024 at 5:00p.m. in the Commission Chambers, 29 Arran Rd., Crawfordville, FL 32327, to Consider:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF WAKULLA COUNTY, FLORIDA, PROVIDING FOR A REFERENDUM ELECTION TO BE HELD ON NOVEMBER 5, 2024, FOR THE PURPOSE OF DETERMINING WHETHER THE WAKULLA COUNTY CHARTER SHOULD BE AMENDED TO REQUIRE WAKULLA COUNTY TO ADOPT AN ORDINANCE REGULATING INTERACTIONS BETWEEN PEDESTRIANS AND MOTORISTS, SUCH AS PANHANDLING; PROVIDING FOR NOTICE OF THE REFERENDUM ELECTION; PROVIDING FOR THE TITLE AND SUBSTANCE OF THE BALLOT MEASURE; PROVIDING FOR VOTE-BY-MAIL BALLOTS; PROVIDING FOR APPOINTMENT OF ELECTION BOARDS; PROVIDING FOR CANVASSING BOARD CERTIFICATION OF RESULTS; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

A copy of this ordinance shall be available for inspection by the public at 3093 Crawfordville Highway, Crawfordville, FL 32327. Interested parties may appear at the Public Hearing or submit comments and be heard with respect to the proposed ordinance. If a person decides to appeal any decision made by the board, agency, or commission with respect to any matter considered at such meeting or hearing, he or she will need a record of the proceedings, and that, for such purpose, he or she may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

Persons with a disability needing a special accommodation should contact the Wakulla County Board of County Commissioners Administration Office at least two (2) days prior to the meeting at (850) 926-0919; Hearing & Voice Impaired at 1-800-955-8771; or email at ADARequest@mywakulla.com

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June 20, 2024

PUBLIC NOTICES:

For our readers' convenience, The Wakulla Sun provides this Public Notice Section for all Public Notices not published in the Legal Notice section of the newspaper.



SOPCHOPPY CITY COUNCIL QUALIFYING INFORMATION

Persons interested in seeking a seat on the Sopchoppy City Council may obtain an information packet from the City Clerk's office, 105 Municipal Avenue, Sopchoppy, FL during normal business hours, Monday - Thursday 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. and Friday 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Qualifying begins at Noon, July 15th and ends at Noon, July 25th. These packets must be picked up, returned and verified before Noon on July 15th when qualifying begins. Three seats on the Council will be open for the 2024 election which will be held November 5, 2024.

June 6, 2024

LEGAL ADVERTISEMENT

WAKULLA COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS INVITATION TO BID No. ITB 2024-35

OTTER CREEK WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY WET WEATHER STORAGE BASIN POND AND REJECT POND LINER INSTALLATION

ADVERTISEMENT BEGIN DATE:

JUNE 20, 2024

RELEASE DATE: JUNE 20, 2024

BIDS DUE TO BOCC:

JULY 16, 2024 @ 3:00 PM EST

Sealed bids to install a geomembrane liner in the Wet Weather Storage Basin Pond and the Reject Pond at the Otter Creek Wastewater Treatment Facility will be received at the office of the Board of County Commissioners, 3093 Crawfordville Highway, Crawfordville, FL 32327; until 3:00 P.M., Local Time, on Tuesday, July 16, 2024, at which time the bids will be opened and read aloud. Bids received after the deadline will not be accepted.

The principal feature of this procurement by the County is known as **Otter Creek Wastewater Treatment Facility Wet Weather Storage Basin Pond and the Reject Pond Liner Installation**. The specifications of this procurement are stated in the **ITB 2024-35**.

The ITB and any addenda issued will be posted to the County's Website at www.mywakulla.com or can be obtained by contacting the County Purchasing Office at 850-926-0919 or ptaylor@mywakulla.com.

All technical inquiries and clarification requests shall be submitted in writing to Patty Taylor, Procurement and Contracts Coordinator, ptaylor@mywakulla.com in accordance with the ITB. Verbal clarifications will not be provided.

A person or affiliate who has been placed on the convicted vendor list following a conviction for a public entity crime may not submit a bid on a contract to provide any goods or services to a public entity, may not submit a bid on a contract with a public entity for the construction or repair of a public building or public work, may not submit bids on leases of real property to a public entity, may not be awarded or perform work as a contractor, supplier, subcontractor, or consultant under a contract with any public entity, and may not transact business with any public entity in excess of the threshold amount provided in Section 287.017, Florida Statutes, for CATEGORY TWO (\$35,000) for a period of 36 months from the date of being placed on the convicted vendor list.

The Wakulla County Board of County Commissioners reserves the right to waive informalities in any bid; reject any or all proposals, in whole or in part; re-bid a project, in whole or in part; and to accept a proposal that in its judgment is the lowest and best bid of a responsible bidder. In accepting a bid, Wakulla County may award a contract based only on the base bid, the base bid plus all alternates, or the base bid plus any alternates which Wakulla County selects -- with all decisions being made based upon what Wakulla County believes to be the best interests of its ratepayers, in the reasonable exercise of its discretion. Wakulla County further reserves the right to increase or decrease quantities as may be required to meet the needs of Wakulla County, at the unit price which was bid.

Wakulla County does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, marital status and disability/handicapped status in employment or provision of service.

*Wakulla County is an Equal Opportunity Employer
MBE/WBE businesses are encouraged to participate
Wakulla County strictly enforces open and fair competition*

ADA - Special Accommodations: Any person requiring accommodations by the County due to a disability should call the Purchasing Office at 850-926-0919 at least five (5) days prior to any pre-response conference, response opening, or meeting. If you are hearing or speech impaired, please contact the County Purchasing Office by the Florida Relay Service, which can be reached at 1-800-955-8771 (TDD).

June 20, 2024

FOLLOW THE SUN.

Opinions

THE FIRST AMENDMENT

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”

LETTERS FROM READERS

Ethics commission responds to Ralph Thomas about alleged conflict

Editor, The Sun:

As we discussed, attached you will find a letter from the Florida Commission on Ethics. I hope you will print the letter in its entirety. Hopefully this will resolve the untrue complaints that have been alleged against me and we can put this issue to rest once and for all. If you need any additional information, just let me know. I hope you have a great day!

Ralph Thomas

Wakulla County Commissioner

Dear Mr. Thomas:

This is in response to your above referenced inquiry in which you, an elected County Commissioner for Wakulla County, Florida, ask about potential voting conflicts you may have based on your work as a mortgage loan officer. You state that in your work as a mortgage loan officer, you provide residential home mortgages to individuals and families. You indicate that allegations have been raised that when you vote on individual applications to change zoning in your official capacity as a County Commissioner, there is a conflict of interest because your votes to approve such individual applications will increase the number of residential properties available, thereby increasing the number of potential mortgage loan customers.

The statute applicable to your inquiry is Section 112.3143(3), Florida Statutes. Section 112.3143(3), which is part of the voting conflict statute, states:

No county, municipal, or other local public officer shall vote in an official capacity upon any measure which would inure to his or her special private gain or loss; which he or she knows would

inure to the special private gain or loss of any principal by whom he or she is retained or to the parent organization or subsidiary of a corporate principal by which he or she is retained, other than an agency as defined in s. 112.312(2); or which he or she knows would inure to the special private gain or loss of a relative or business associate of the public officer.

The statute defines “special private gain or loss” as an “economic benefit or harm that would inure to the officer, his or her relative, business associate or principal[.]” See Section 112.3143(1)(d), Florida Statutes. Therefore, a voting conflict would be created if a county commissioner were to vote on any measure that would financially affect himself or herself, or that he or she knows will financially affect a principal by whom he or she is retained, a relative, a business associate, or another person or entity listed in the statute.

When determining whether “special private gain or loss” will occur, Section 112.3143(1)(d) specifies several factors must be considered, including the “degree to which there is uncertainty at the time of the vote as to whether there would be any economic benefit or harm to the public officer, his or her relative, business associate, or principal and, if so, the nature or degree of the economic benefit or harm . . .” In a number of opinions, the Commission on Ethics has found that the potential effects of a vote to be too “remote and speculative” to constitute the “special private gain or loss” required to violate the statute, when the potential financial effect of the vote on an individual enumerated in the statute is too attenuated.

For example, in CEO 06-8, the Commission considered a situation in which a city councilmember was faced

with a vote to redevelop city-owned land located near properties owned by himself or his father. The Commission found the possible financial effect from the votes to be “remote or speculative” and concluded that Section 112.3143(3) would not apply, noting the nature and degree of effect on the properties in question was too uncertain.

Additionally, CEO 89-45 concerned a situation where a city commissioner owned and operated a steel company that designed and bid steel packages to general contractors and developers. These general contractors and developers often appeared before the city commission to obtain approvals for projects located within the city. The Commission on Ethics found the city commissioner would not be in violation of Section 112.3143(3) if he were to vote on projects when, at the time of the vote, he and his company had not entered into any contact with the general contractor or developer concerning the project. In such cases—where he and his company had made no proposals to the general contractor or developer—the Commission found any perceived gain to him was too speculative to find a conflict.

Turning to your inquiry, you indicate your question concerns from indi-

viduals who are not your current customers, and that you are not inquiring about county-wide zoning changes. Under these parameters, it appears any special private gain or loss these votes could have on you is too “remote or speculative” to constitute the type of “special gain” that would implicate the voting conflict statute. Accordingly, it appears Section 112.3143(3) will not prohibit you from voting on these measures. The only exception would be if—at the time of the vote—you know or have reason to believe that the individual seeking approval of his or her application for change of zoning is or will be a client of yours in your capacity as a mortgage loan officer. In that case, you should treat the vote as a conflict and respond in accordance with the requirements set forth in Section 112.3143(3) (i.e., declare the conflict prior to the vote, abstain from the vote, and file the voting conflict memorandum (CE Form 8B) within 15 days of the vote).

Should you have further questions, or if this letter misinterprets the facts of your inquiry, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Gray Schafer

Assistant General Counsel
Florida Commission on Ethics

Appreciate Sun's handling of candidates

Editor, The Sun:

I'd like to thank The Wakulla Sun for its careful and conscientious handling of our coming election and the candidates involved.

The Sun makes a clear differentiation between paid political advertisements and political announcements. These are clearly stated and are not

represented as if they were news articles.

No matter which candidate you prefer, each person seeking office is treated fairly before the election in the different issues of the Sun.

I appreciate your professional journalism.

Sincerely,

Marj Law

On the Horizon

Calendar of events for the week of June 20

Thursday, June 20

- SUMMER BEGINS.
- The Wakulla County Chamber of Commerce is holding a Business After Hours event at Riverside Cafe in St. Marks from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
- The Cancer Support Group will meet in the Education Center of the Crawfordville United Methodist Church at 7 p.m. every third Thursday of the month. This group meeting is for men and women, regardless of the type of cancer. Spouses, caregivers, and friends are welcome. For more information, call 850-926-6050.
- The VFW Auxiliary Bingo Night will be held at 7 p.m. at 475 Arran Road in Crawfordville, every Thursday. There are concessions and raffles.
- Yin Yoga at 6 p.m. with Nellie every Thursday. Classes are \$12, at New Posh on 3079 Crawfordville Hwy. RSVP to newposh3079@gmail.com or text/call at (850) 528-5838.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at 6:30 p.m. every Thursday at 54 Ochlockonee St.

Friday, June 21

- The Wakulla County Tourist Development Council holds a public meeting at 9 a.m. in the large conference room in the BOCC Administration Complex.
- Salute to our Veterans event will be held at the Wakulla Community Center from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Friday and Saturday.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at noon and 8 p.m. every Friday at 54 Ochlockonee St.

Saturday, June 22

- 4th Annual Gage Pitman Rockin' Reds Fishing Tournament will be held at Woolley Park in Panacea from 2 to 6 p.m.
- The Paul Hoover Memorial Freedom Run 5K will be held at Wakulla Springs State Park beginning at 8 a.m.
- The Master Gardeners and the Garden Club will be holding plant sales on Saturday, June 22, from 9 a.m. to noon at the livestock pavilion at the 4-H extension office. Master Gardeners will be inside the arena; the Garden Club will be outside the arena. Cash and check only.
- The Salute to our Veterans event will be held at the Wakulla Community Center from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

- St. Marks Community Market, sponsored by Discover St. Marks, will be held from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 815 Port Leon Drive.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at 6:30 p.m. every Saturday at 54 Ochlockonee St.

Sunday, June 23

- 4th Annual Gage Pitman Rockin' Reds Fishing Tournament will be held at Woolley Park in Panacea from 1 to 4 p.m.

Monday, June 24

- The Sopchoppy Lions Club meets the 4th Monday of each month at the Historic Sopchoppy High School at 6:30 p.m.
- The Wakulla Respite Program will be available for anyone with memory impairment at no cost from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Lake Ellen Baptist Church every Monday.
- Yoga 101 with Nellie at 6 p.m. Classes are \$12, packages available at New Posh on 3079 Crawfordville Hwy. RSVP to newposh3079@gmail.com or text/call at (850) 528-5838.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. at 54 Ochlockonee St.

Tuesday, June 25

- Sopchoppy community dinner is held every week at the Towles House at 6:30 p.m.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at 6:30 p.m. at 54 Ochlockonee St.
- Yoga Flow with Nellie at 6 p.m. Classes are \$12, packages available at New Posh on 3079 Crawfordville Hwy. RSVP to newposh3079@gmail.com or text/call at (850) 528-5838.

Wednesday, June 26

- The Wakulla County Chamber of Commerce is hosting their monthly Luncheon at the Wakulla County Community Center from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- A line dance class is held at 1 p.m. at the Wakulla Senior Center every Wednesday.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at noon and 6:30 p.m. every Wednesday at 54 Ochlockonee St.
- Gentle Yoga and Stetching Class, every Wednesday, 11 a.m. Wakulla Community Center. Bring a mat. Come early to sign in. Chair Yoga participants welcome. \$2 per class.

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William Snowden
Editor & Publisher
The Wakulla Sun

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"It's A New Day!"

The Wakulla Sun



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FLORIDA PRESS FOUNDATION NEWS PAPER

– Compiled by Lynda Kinsey

Polled at Crawfordville Quick Stop: What do you do to cool off in this heat?



MARZELL MANN
Thomas Concrete

“Go to the beach or a pool.”



REBECCA HUMPHRIES
Retired

“It depends on how humid it is. If it is really humid, I am hunting the air conditioning.”



GERALD BONDS
Commercial Fisherman

“Go swimming somewhere.”



TONY WILLIAMS
GPS Automotive

“Get in the pool!”



JEFF THARPE
The Lawn Ranger

“Drink a lot of water and hope for the best. I’m in the lawn business so I try to work along the shade lines when I can.”

Wakulla Station News

By **VERNA BROCK**

What a blessing!

I hope everyone had a wonderful Father’s Day. My family was able to get together on Saturday to celebrate a couple of June birthdays and Father’s Day, and had a great time. It was fun to all be together (for the most part) and just visit for a while.

Pam Adams shared a report from the Annual Conference of United Methodists in Lakeland this past Sunday morning. The two best things were the reappointment of Pastor Steve Montgomery for another year; and a new grant program

being designed to help fight childhood hunger in Florida.

WHEW! Watching the FSU baseball team in Omaha has been a real roller coaster ride! The Gators haven’t been any more relaxing either. Here’s hoping both teams keep winning for a while more.

I know you all share my excitement, nay, joy, at getting a few drops of rain this weekend. Our grass has

gotten downright crunchy, and my flowers are beyond wilted...I fear this is going to be a long hot summer.

Thank you for lifting our neighbors and friends who are standing in the need of prayer. Two year old Jordan Cooper, Cindy Blackstock, her sister Deborah Giles, Patti Moxley and the Moxley family, Mary Jo Dowling, Thelma Watts, Becky Perkins, Clem Bunker, and the family of Katie Page all need our prayerful support.

Sopchoppy News

By **DJ BUTCH**

I attended the City of Sopchoppy meeting Monday. If you live in the city limits you should really attend the meetings to see what is going on in your town. The meeting was short but they hit a few topics.

The city is getting ready for the Fourth of July celebration. They are getting ready for the parade. Vendors spots are filling up. Gonna be some great performances and don’t

forget the Mr. Legs contest...

One commissioner got some complaints about snakes at the city park. Welcome to Florida y’all... Be careful and swim at your own risk. The city is going to mow close to the water to make the bank more visible. But your commissioners can’t stop wildlife. Always be careful and check your surroundings before entering the water. We have gators, snakes, locals and all kinds of wild animals.

Three seats are up for election this

year. You must live in the city limits to run and/or vote.

I DJ every second Friday at Low Tide in Panacea, located under Trident. It was an awesome crowd. We had a really good time. I just wanted to say THANK YOU to everyone who came Friday night. It was an absolute amazing night. I sold hats, got tips, took pics, signed autographs. I got several requests for my original music. I could really see and feel the love! I want y’all to know it means the world to me. The love y’all show is what has made me grow.... Thank you, I love ya and see ya next second Friiiiiiday!

I went to Seineyard for Father’s Day and I was approached by a gentleman. He said he read the Sopchoppy News. I really appreciate everyone who takes the time to read my article and follow me on social media. It is really growing and I’m very thankful to each one of you great people who support.

Sopchoppy weather has been hot but sunny days! I did a little work in the yard and found out the Yella flies are still hanging out. Be safe in this heat.

Sopchoppy is a special place. Lord bless this land. Amen.

Library News

Library News June 20-26

Thursday, June 20th
Creative Writing 10am
Veteran’s Meetup 11am
Summer Breakspot Free Meals for Kids 11am
Trail Blazers 2pm

Conservation Warriors 4pm
Wakulla Amateur

Friday, June 21st
Quilting Guild 9:30 am

Saturday, June 22nd
No programs

Sunday, June 23rd
Closed

Monday, June 24th
No Programs

Tuesday, June 25th
Book Bunch 10am
CTST 11am
Summer Breakspot Free Meals for Kids 11am

Summer performance at Community Center Tiger Rock Martial Arts 7pm

Wednesday, June 26th
Book Babies 10am
Summer Breakspot Free Meals for Kids 11am
Adventure Seekers 2pm
Knitters 4pm



Leadership Academy

On June 9th through 14th, the Area 10 Navy JROTC Leadership Academy was held at Riverside Preparatory Academy in Gainesville, Ga. Leadership Academy consists of the top 5 percent of cadets in their respected area in which the cadets go through rigorous training and academics to earn the silver leadership cord. This year, Leadership Academy was comprised of three different areas, Area 8 (Tennessee schools), Area 9 (Atlanta) and Area 10 (Lower Georgia and Florida panhandle schools to include Jacksonville). Wakulla High School had three cadets graduate from Leadership Academy this year.

Pictured are MSGT Tony Lane (Naval Science Instructor), C/LCDR Heath McBrayer, C/ENS Joshua Bennight, C/ENS Kaylena Pontones, IT1(SW/AW) Chuck Meyer-riecks (Naval Science Instructor)

Wakulla grad to compete at Miss Florida

Tia Unsell, 25, of Crawfordville, will be competing June 26th-29th at the 88th Miss Florida Scholarship Competition in Lakeland.

Currently, Unsell holds the title of Miss Ocala. Unsell won the title of Miss Ocala January 27th at Eastside High School in Gainesville, FL, where there were nine young women in her division. This will be the first time in seven years that there has been a Miss Ocala representative on the Miss Florida stage. If crowned Miss Florida, she would be the first young woman from the Panhandle of Florida to win the crown in 10 years. She will be competing in five mandatory phases of competition: Private Interview, On Stage Question, Evening Gown, Talent and a new phase fitness, that was implemented into the competition last year. Unsell’s community service initiative is Dancers Against Cancer, a nonprofit organization that provides financial assistance to dancers, dance educators and their families battling cancer. Currently this organization has raised over \$3 million with their goal of \$5 million. Her talent is a jazz dance to “Fame” by Nautri Naughton.

The winner of the Miss Florida Scholarship Competition will go on to compete at Miss America in early 2025 in Orlando, FL. The Miss America Organization is the largest provider of scholarships for young women.



Tia Unsell

Unsell is a 2017 graduate of Wakulla High School and is a graduate of Florida State University with a degree in Communication Sciences & Disorders to become a Speech Language Pathologist. She is also a recreational and competitive dance teacher at Studio 88 Dance Productions in Crawfordville.

To keep up with the competition week, please like the Miss Florida Scholarship Program page and Miss Ocala 2024- Tia Unsell on Facebook.

FOLLOW THE SUN.

Outdoors

outdoor sports

HOME ON THE RANGE

Four guns: two striker-fired, two hammer-fire



By MARJ LAW

Today we're at the gun range with four handguns:

- FN 509C
- CZ P07
- Sig Sauer M11 A1
- Sig Sauer P320 AXG Classic

If you had asked me about these four handguns 20 years ago, I'd have said they are all black, and have things Joe calls a trigger, a trigger guard, a magazine, a button to let out the magazine, a thing Joe calls a "slide," and a few levers on the lower part of the gun that he calls the frame. They all looked the same to me. Like a car: 4 wheels, doors, and it gets you where you want to go.

Some people can talk at length about differences in cars. I only care about a certain degree of comfort, it gets you from place to place and it doesn't break down.

But handguns?

They are all unique and different in their own ways.

Take these four guns. Back when, I'd have said they're all about the same length and height, similar weight,

and they're black. Two have sticky-outy things (hammers) protruding from the back of that top thing (slide), and two of them do not.

Today, all these years later, I'd begin by saying two are hammer-fired guns and the other two are striker-fired guns.

Joe and I have a running enthusiastic disagreement. He prefers hammer guns and I prefer striker guns.

"Hammer guns have the very best triggers; no questions asked," he says self-assuredly. "Most hammer guns were designed by the honorable John Moses Browning." He gives this statement the moment of silence the Browning name deserves.

"Their design has withstood the test of time" he continues. "I like the angle of the grips, too. In the Navy, I learned to shoot a hammer gun. Yes, they are the best."

Oh, sure.

Well, I prefer striker-fired guns. Their new(ish) designs have made them often easy to shoot and easy to learn. They often have less recoil. Most of us prefer less recoil. I like a low recoil, easy gun. Striker-fired handguns are the best.

So today, Joe's out to prove me wrong. Ha. The FN and the Sig 320 are striker-fired guns. The Sig M11 A1 and the CZ are hammer-fired guns.

We're going to shoot three rounds with each of the four guns for a total possible 12 hits on each target. The target on the right will be for



the striker guns and the one on the left will have holes from the hammer guns.

To add a little more interest, the striker FN has a polymer frame and so does the hammer CZ.

As Athlon outdoors says: "Polymer frames offer a few advantages, including flex for some recoil absorption, lower cost, and, in some cases, lighter weight. However, they don't match the more organic feel of metal frames, and they lack a certain aesthetic appeal as well."

The hammer Sig M11 A1 has a metal frame and the striker Sig P320 has a metal frame.

Often the heavier guns have an advantage in accuracy because the gun stays solidly in your hands; its mass absorbs some of the recoil. So, you'd guess that the Sig M11 A1 and the Sig P320 would have a slight edge over the FN and the CZ.

They are a bit heavier. The metal Sig M11 A1 weighs 29.6 ounces and the P320 is 31.3 ounces. Part of this is due to the 320's longer grip with a 17-round magazine, while the other three guns have 15-round

magazines. The polymer framed FN is 25.5 ounces and the CZ is 27.7. Will a few ounces make a difference?

Barrel length in these 4 is very similar: the FN 3.7 inches, CZ 3.8 inches and the Sig 320 3.9 inches and the Sig 320 3.9 inches too. FN is 6.8 inches long, CZ is 7.2 inches long, M11 A1 is 7.1 inches long and the P320 is 7.4 inches long. You can see that barrel length and the length of the guns is quite similar.

So, we've found four guns with similar size and weight. Two are hammer guns and two are striker guns, and one of the hammer guns has a metal frame and one has a polymer frame. Of the striker guns, one has a metal frame and one a polymer frame. Thanks to our friend Ed, who has loaned us a couple handguns, we're off to the Wakulla County Sheriff's Office range to make the definitive answer as to which is best: hammer or striker-fired guns.

For some people, I'd be afraid they'd shoot poorly on the guns they didn't like. However, Joe is proud of his shooting and too ethical to shoot

poorly to prove a point.

Here we go. Oh, and we'll shoot the hammer guns in single action only. Otherwise, we'll need a tow truck to pull them in double action. (Sorry, Joe.)

We begin with the Sig 320 with the metal frame. It's a striker (my fave). Joe gets all three bullets in our 8-inch target at 21 feet. Two of them hit the bullseye. I get all mine in too and one is a bullseye. Wah-hoo! Joe rates trigger, trigger pull, recoil, grip, and racking the slide all as the easiest you can get. I give trigger pull, trigger travel and recoil easy scores, but the grip is too wide for me and I find racking the slide is a bit stiff.

Next, we shoot the FN 509: also a striker. No bull's-eyes from either of us on this one, but you can see that we shot a couple tight groupings with only 1 shot at the lower edge of the target.

When it comes to the hammer guns, Joe shoots the Sig M11 A1 first. Again, three shots each. Drat. He gets the first in the bullseye and the second shot smack close to the bull's-eye.

The last shot is an oops! I don't get the center, but all three are on the target.

Last, we shoot the hammer-fired CZ. It's shooting low. Or are we the ones shooting low? But three shots each in an 8-inch target is pretty consistent.

All four guns shoot accurately and with no failures to fire or other glitches. On this particular day, we both shot the striker-fired guns a smidgen more accurately. And the striker Sig P320 has wooden grips which seat very comfortably in our hands.

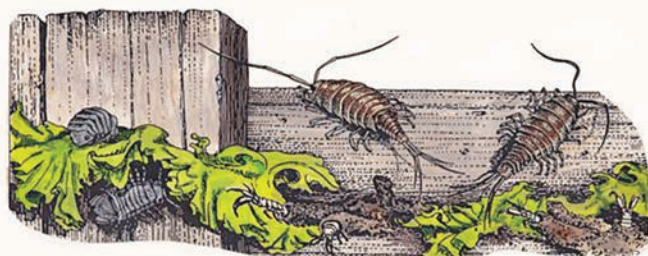
Our shooting of four similarly sized 9mm handguns hasn't given any edge to either striker or hammer-fired guns.

So, Joe maintains hammer guns are the best, and has his experience in the Navy to back it up.

I know that striker-fired handguns are the best.

Because, well, I know it.

Marj Law is the former director of Keep Wakulla County Beautiful who has become an avid shooter in retirement.



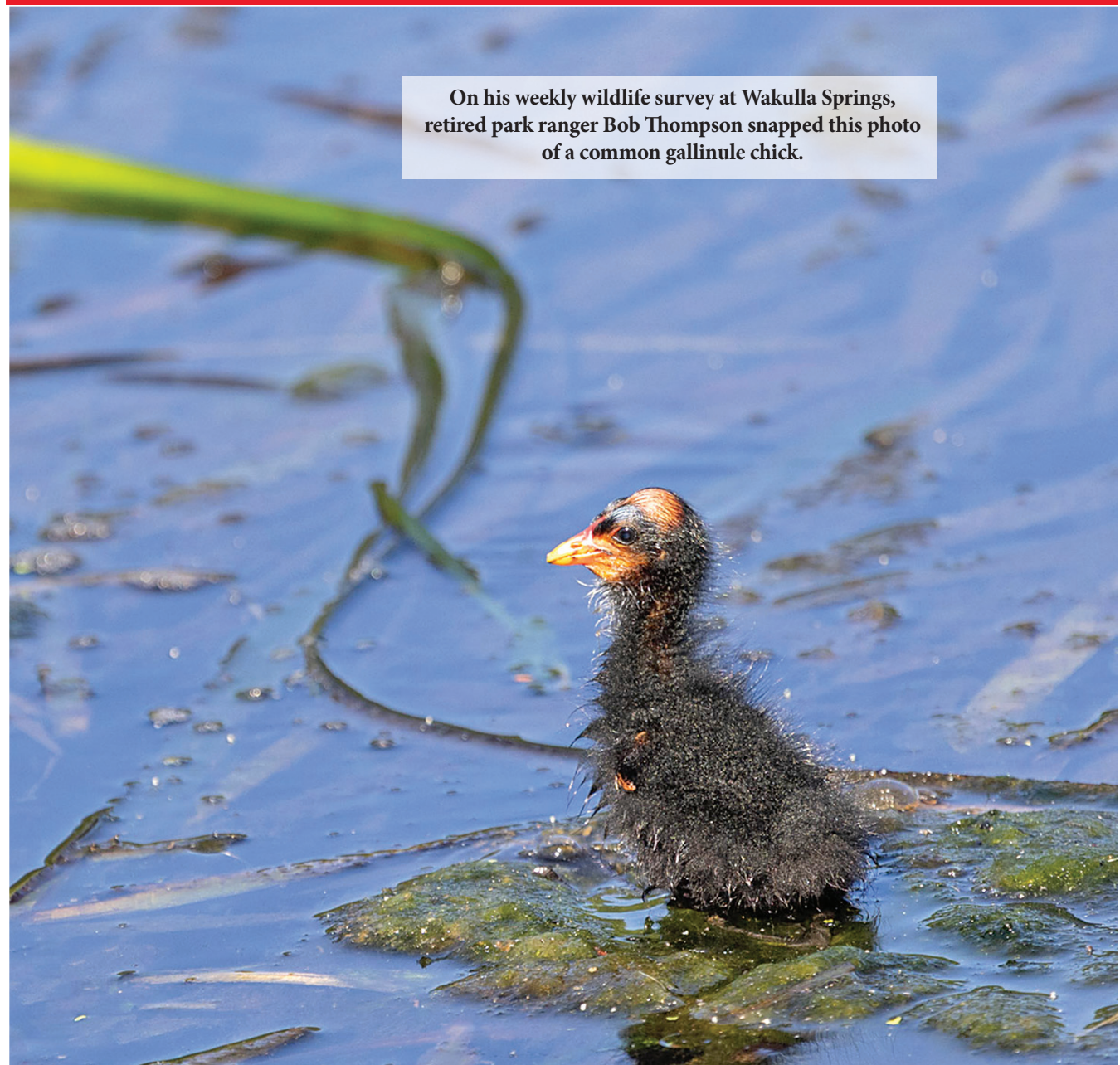
SEA ROACH (*Ligia exotica*)

These isopods hide in crevices during the day and at night scavenge for detritus and plant debris. The sea roach is not thought to be native to North America but arrived about 1880 on ships from Europe. Though now common in supratidal tidal zone all along the warmer American coast, unlike many invasive species the sea roach does not have a known negative impact. Many animals, especially birds, eat them. They are favorite organisms to study in science class because they are common and large for an isopod.

Eukarya, Animalia, Arthropoda, Malacostraca, Isopoda, Dasytida



WEEKLY WILDLIFE PHOTO



On his weekly wildlife survey at Wakulla Springs, retired park ranger Bob Thompson snapped this photo of a common gallinule chick.

Wakulla Lawn Ranger
Gene Darby
 850-251-9122 
Mowing
Edging - Trimming
Sidewalk/Driveways
Pressurewashing
Landscaping
Licensed & Insured
Great Prices - Great Work

God loves you – unconditionally and without fail



By **SHERYL H. BOLDT**

Have you ever been afraid someone you love would stop loving you? Maybe you're struggling

with insecurity. Perhaps you haven't been very loving yourself. Or maybe it's been a long time since you've been your "best self," and you're afraid someone you care about is going to give up on you.

This week's verse speaks of the type of love we all crave – the "love [that] never ends" (1 Corinthians 13:8 ESV). Several translations say, "Love never fails."

Raise your hand, or better yet, email me if you can promise to love

any person in your life perfectly, all the time, no matter what. (I'm not expecting a lot of emails.)

Most of us aim never to fail when it comes to loving people we care about. We seek to love God perfectly, yet we fail here also. We prove it each time we dishonor Him with one of our poor choices.

Isn't it good to know God's love for us never fails, no matter what we do? His love for us remains forever strong. While He doesn't love

all our choices, He does love us – unconditionally and without fail.

May we not take our heavenly Father's love for granted. Rather, as we become more and more aware of God's love for us and mature in our love for Him, may we become better at loving those around us.

Loving others, especially when they don't "deserve" our affection, is more important than we realize. When we model God's love, our relationships thrive. When

we refrain from behaving in unloving, spiteful ways to those who annoy us, mistreat us and don't love us back, we show the world what real love looks like. This type of love begins with understanding God's love for us, recognizing God's love for others and purposing to love others with the love He puts in our hearts.

How can you exhibit this kind of love toward others?

My husband, Bert, often demonstrates this

type of love toward me. After we fight, he'll come to me – even when I'm still angry – and hold me. Each time he does, I experience the kind of love I crave most at that moment – a love that whispers, "I will never stop loving you."

Sheryl H. Boldt is a sales executive for Wave 94 and author of the blog, www.TodayCanBeDifferent.net. Connect with her at SherylHBoldt.Wave94@gmail.com.

The farmer



By **CHERYL CRUCE**

It feels like yesterday when I was a shadow in the garden, walking the rows behind my Daddy. Wearing a pair of overalls and stepping barefoot in his tracks, I loved spending time with my Dad in the garden. He would loosen the soil, and I would grab the newly uncovered potato to place in the bucket.

Dad's garden was al-

ways full of good things to eat, and harvest time was busy. Mom would prepare the yield for canning for the months ahead. With those days gone by, I miss the freshness of the garden harvest.

Dad was never a big-time farmer, just a gardener who understood the wonder of a tiny seed feeding his family and often the neighbors, too. My daughter married a farmer, although he would humbly reject the "big-time" reference. He prefers being called "The Hay Guy." Through him, I gained a new respect for the American farmer. Up before the sun and home long after the supper dishes are cleared away, the farmer continues to look be-

yond the moment. They understand which fields will produce the greatest crops and how to cultivate, plant, and irrigate the endless rows for the best produce.

I have also learned to appreciate the slow-moving farm equipment on rural roads. Instead of feeling frustrated while driving behind the machinery, I see it as a testament to an American farmer's hard work and dedication. Seeing these massive machines reminds me of the journey from tiny seeds to the produce that eventually reaches our tables. Slow travel is no longer an inconvenience but a part of the rhythm of rural life that I have learned to embrace.

It's incredible how

farmers devotion to his work can be a powerful metaphor for how a believer can plant seeds of faith in a person's spirit.

Just as a farmer carefully sows seeds in the soil, Christians sow the seeds of love, kindness, and compassion in the world around them. The parable of the farmer sowing seeds takes on a deeper meaning when we consider the critical role of tending the seeds of faith in others. As believers, we can nurture and support those around us. We can help the seeds of faith take root and grow, much like a farmer cultivates the soil to ensure a bountiful harvest. We, too, can bring a harvest of goodwill.

Even so, the farmer's

field can be vulnerable to the elements of the world—such as flooding, winds, and drought. When this happens, the farmer does not give up. He begins again with renewed hope as he prepares the ground for a new seed. Similarly, when we share the Word of God with others, we may wonder if we are making a difference.

Sometimes, the element of sin threatens the harvest. We cannot give up. The Apostle Paul encourages us not to grow weary but to stay focused; he promises that soon we will reap a good harvest (Galatians 6:9).

Therefore, let us not give up on doing good. God has given us seeds of encouragement to plant in the hearts of

others. We may never see the results of the seeds we sow in their lives. However, God has promised that His word will return a harvest (Isaiah 55:11).

So, let us embrace the farmer's wisdom and continue cultivating the good seeds of the Kingdom of God as we love and care for one another.

1 Corinthians 3:6,9 I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. 9 For we are co-workers in God's service; you are God's field, God's building.

Cheryl Mixon-Cruce is Pastor of Ochlockonee Bay United Methodist Church and Sopchoppy United Methodist Church.

OUT TO PASTOR

I'll tell you when I've had enough



By **JAMES SNYDER**

It was evening, and the day was just about over. The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and I were chilling in the living room, watching TV.

It is always lovely when the day ends, and you can relax. Doing nothing can become a habit.

I'm not sure what we were watching on TV; it really doesn't matter. What matters is that we were relaxing and enjoying the evening together. No appointments, no plans, just an evening of doing nothing. It's that kind of relaxing that I can't get enough of. It's too late to do anything, and it's too early to go to bed. What a wonderful scenario.

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage went out into the kitchen and then called me and said, "Do you think you've had enough ice cream for the day?"

I didn't know if it was a rhetorical question or

she was setting me up for a trap. I've been set up before, and I'll never know when the next one will be. Anything with ice cream is worth the chance.

I cheerfully responded, "I'll tell you when I've had enough ice cream and I haven't had enough for today."

A soft voice from the kitchen area said, "Would you like me to bring you another bowl of ice cream?"

I responded, "That would be wonderful, and I sure would appreciate that."

I can never think of a time when I had too much ice cream. My mother often told me I had too much ice cream. But you know how mothers are? They don't always tell the truth.

When it comes to vegetables, I can have too much of that. I can have too much when it comes to other things as well. But who in their right mind could ever say they've had too much ice cream?

My mother once told me, "You should be eating more fruits instead of ice cream."

I responded, "Well then, get me some peach ice cream."

As I was growing up, all my mother wanted to do was feed me vegetables. It's not that I don't like vegetables,

but there comes a time when I've had enough.

When I was young, my favorite Saturday morning cartoon was, Popeye the Sailor Man. As you know, Popeye is famous for eating spinach, which gave him all the energy and strength he needed.

One Saturday, as I was watching Popeye, my mother came in and said, "Oh, I see you're watching Popeye the Sailor Man. Do you know he loves spinach? I think maybe you should start eating spinach like Popeye."

I looked at my mother seriously and said, "You do know that Popeye smokes a pipe. So if I eat his spinach do I also smoke his pipe?"

That was the last time my mother ever brought that subject up.

As a youngster, I mowed the grass for our neighbor next door, who had a tiny grocery shop. When I mowed the grass, I went into her little shop, and she gave me soda pop and my favorite ice cream cone.

She could've paid me money to mow the grass, but what value can you put on your favorite ice cream cone?

So when The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage asked me if I'd had enough ice cream, I cheerfully told

her, "absolutely not." There is no way under the sun that I could ever have enough ice cream in one day.

If there ever comes a time when I answer my wife's question by saying, "Yes, my dear, I think I've had enough ice cream for today," you know I've lost my mind.

I've often wondered who invented ice cream. They sure have my approval. I think they did a wonderful thing to the human race by creating something as delicious as ice cream. Even to this day, I can't name all of the different flavors of ice cream.

My goal in life is to find all the different flavors of ice cream and sample each one for the world's record.

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage brought me a very nice bowl of ice cream. "Here you are, I hope this is enough ice cream for tonight."

I just smiled at her because I never think beyond the ice cream I'm eating at the time. I refuse to compromise that marvelous experience of eating ice cream by thinking of other things.

Then my wife said something rather strange. "Do you know," she said rather seriously, "that there is no ice cream in heaven?"

I chuckled as I ate another spoonful of ice cream. I looked at her and said, "That's why I'm trying to eat as much ice cream as I can now. I want to get my share of ice cream while I still have the opportunity."

While eating that ice cream I remembered a verse in the Bible. It caused me to think about some of my habits.

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Galatians 6:7-8).

Sometimes I want what I want when I want it. Usually, I don't give much thought to consequences.

I need to sharpen my focus on my spiritual life and trust God to lead me everyday.

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Obituaries



George Burton Root

George Burton Root, 71, formerly of Crawfordville, passed away June 8, 2024, in Joshua, Texas. He was born on May 3, 1953, in Philipsburg, Pennsylvania.

After graduating from Moshannon Valley High School in 1971 George served in the United States Navy as a Boiler Technician from 1972 to 1976. His career path led him being a Federal Correctional Officer and then a US Mail Carrier until his retirement in 2010.

He is survived by his wife of 47 years, Susan Rene Metcalf Root formerly of Panacea; two sons, Jonathan Root, Gig Harbor, Washington, and Jonas Root, Joshua, Texas; and the apple of his eye, his only grandson, Korbin Root, Gig Harbor, Washington; sisters, Donna

Aylward (Jim), Bradford, Pennsylvania, Daisy Mosley, Houtzdale, Pennsylvania, Howard Root (Paula), Osceola Mills, Pennsylvania, David Root, Brisbin, Pennsylvania, Jeffrey Root, Bradford, Pennsylvania, Elaine Owens (Mike), Detroit, and Pamela Hull, Mansfield, Ohio, plus many nieces and nephews who he adored.

He was preceded in death by his father George Burton Root Sr., mother Alice Faye Stonebraker Root, sisters Sandra McDonald and Catherine Root-Roberts and brother Mark Root.

A service to honor George's life will be held on Wednesday, June 12, 2024 at 10 a.m. at Mountain Valley Funeral Home, 3407 SW Wilshire Blvd, Joshua, Texas 76058.

Peggy Brett Page

Peggy Brett Page, 91, of Wakulla Station, died peacefully on June 12, 2024, after a lengthy illness.

Born January 5, 1933, in DeFuniak Springs, the third daughter of John and Gladys Brett, Peggy lived in Tallahassee and graduated from Leon High School in 1950. On June 16, 1956, she married her husband of 48 years Edward L. Page Sr. Peggy retired from Florida State University where she worked for many years. In 1983, she and Ed moved to Wakulla Station where she resided until her passing.

The middle child of seven brothers and sisters

Peggy dearly loved and was fiercely loyal to her siblings, her in-laws and her many nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by her husband Edward, her oldest brother H. James Brett, older sister Bobbie Reid, and younger brothers Mickey Brett and George Brett. She is survived by her son Edward L. Page Jr., oldest sister Gloria DeStefano and youngest sister Patsy Tadlock.

A graveside service will be held on Monday, June 17, 2024, at 1 p.m. at the Woodville Cemetery officiated by Wayne Baker, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Wakulla Station. Memorial contributions may be made to Big Bend Hospice, 1723 Mahan Center Blvd., Tallahassee FL 32308.

Church Briefs

• Macedonia Community Church to hold Fun Day on July 20

You are cordially invited to attend and participate in our annual "Fun Day" to be held at the Macedonia Community Church of Sopchoppy, 1085 Sopchoppy Hwy. in Sopchoppy. The fun-filled day of activities

will be held July 20th from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The event will feature, games wellness checks, wellness workshops, wellness resources and food.

This is a "free" community event and you are encouraged to come and enjoy a day of fun with your family and friends.

We are hoping to see you there.

Bishop Alfred Nelson Sr., Presiding Bishop and Mother Bobbery Rosier, Event Coordinator for the West Florida Diocese Church of Christ Written In Heaven.

Ed Brimmer

From Front Page

use of office space.

The culture of this office now reflects the desire to follow laws and serve our fellow citizens. Many of the changes made were needed due to years of poor management culminating in the removal of the prior property appraiser for fraud.

On my second day in office, I discovered the IRS had filed a Federal Tax Lien against this office totaling \$58,441.95, including civil penalties of \$55,929.33 for errors dating back to 2015. After 6 months of constant work, the civil penalties were waived and we received a Release of Federal Tax Lien on June 23, 2021.

When I took office, an out-of-town CPA firm performed the Property Appraiser's accounting and payroll. Mr. Greg James, the Wakulla County Clerk of Court and Comptroller, informed me his office performed accounting and payroll functions for other county offices and could provide this service to the Property Appraiser's office. With the Clerk's help, we are saving Wakulla Citizens tens of thousands of dollars every year. An additional benefit of this agreement is there is even more oversight on internal spending.

Unfortunately, there have been some hiccups during the last three years. The "BIG ONE" involved a vacant parcel that was inadvertently assessed at \$307,500,000 rather than the correct amount of \$7,500. The Wakulla County Tax Collector noticed this larger than usual tax bill and alerted us. I immediately informed our taxing authorities. Budgets were adjusted and no money

was wasted. A new internal check was implemented to prevent a recurrence of this error. The system of checks and balances worked.

To maintain an acceptable quality of life in Wakulla County, local governments need revenue. Your property taxes support public education, law enforcement, fire safety, street maintenance, parks and recreation, and other services. Florida statutes require the property appraiser to assess all property using the "market" value; which means the price a typical buyer would pay for your property. This office has a legal responsibility to study property sales and appraise your property accordingly. Determining a fair and equitable value is the only role of this office in the taxing process.

If a property appraiser fails to do their job, assessed values become skewed. Some people are forced to pay more than their fair share of taxes to support government operations. Artificially low assessments on some buildings forces our taxing authorities to raise the millage rate on all citizens to make up the difference. A expert property appraiser is important.

This office has many other responsibilities including:

- Tracking ownership changes
- Tracking permits and documenting new construction
- Accepting and approving applications from individuals eligible for exemptions and other forms of property tax relief
- Keeping descriptions of buildings and property characteristics up to date
- Analyzing trends in sales prices, construc-

tion costs, and rents to best estimate the value of property

• Maintaining maps of parcel boundaries

I know how important fair assessments are for local families and small businesses. I remain committed to honest and impartial assessments. I am also committed to customer service and the philosophy of continuous improvement. I will continue our outreach to Wakulla citizens and plan to implement a public education program to better educate property owners and real estate professionals on tax exemptions and other techniques they can use to reduce their tax burden.

I hold a Florida License as a State-Certified General Real Estate Appraiser, License number RZ3797. In addition, the Florida Department of Revenue recognizes me as a Certified Florida Appraiser. I am active in the Florida Association of Property Appraisers and serve as the District 1 Director on the Board of Directors. I also serve on the Property Ap-

praisers' Association of Florida's Legislative Committee and actively lobby Senators and Representatives concerning issues impacting our citizens. The second district court also recognizes me as an expert witness on real estate valuation issues.

When I'm not in the office, I'm usually surrounded by family and friends. My wife, Tina, and I have three children and eight grandchildren (with another on the way) to keep us busy. I have always attempted to live a life of service and am proud of the service of my children. I served in the military for over 20 years. My oldest daughter's husband is a Florida Trooper, my youngest daughter's husband is serving in the Air Force as a Tactical Air Controller, and my son is a helicopter pilot in the Army. It is an honor to live a life of service.

I have worked hard and have been privileged to serve Wakulla County these last three and a half years. I will continue to work hard and am ready to serve.

DEATH NOTICES

• **Aubrey Barrow**, 93, of Crawfordville, died June 15, 2024.

• **Michael Beatty**, 71, of Crawfordville, died June 15, 2024.

• **Louis Cravens**, 60, of Crawfordville, died June 8, 2024.

• **Jacqueline Mellott**, 83, of Crawfordville, died June 8, 2024.

• **Joyce St. Onge**, 77, of Crawfordville, died June 14, 2024.

Family Funeral Home at Harvey Young Chapel.
850-926-5919 Familyfhc.com

Political races set

From Front Page

current incumbents, city commissioners Sharon Rudd, Tim Lawrence, and John Gunter, as well as Mayor Steve Remke, have qualified to run for re-election.

City Commissioner Paula Bell is the only one St. Marks city commissioner who isn't up for election.

July 15th is the qualifying deadline for City of Sopchoppy commissioners, with Mayor Glenn Rudd, Vice Mayor Roger McKenzie, and Commissioner Michele Harden up for re-election.

Legion Taylor contributed to this report.

Editor's Notes

- Because there is no mail delivery for the Juneteenth holiday on June 19, many subscribers will receive the Sun a day late.
- There is no Sheriff's Report this week. That feature will return next week.

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 I D A S S O M E A K T O A A F N G E S G
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WORDS

- ACIDIC
- ASADO
- BARBECUE
- BARK
- BASTE
- BRINE
- BRISKET
- BURGERS
- CARRYOVER
- CHAR
- CHARCOAL
- CHIMNEY
- DRY-AGED
- FLAME
- FLAT
- FORK-TENDER
- GRILL
- HEAT
- LEAN
- MARINADE
- RIBS
- RUB
- SMOKE
- TEMPERATURE

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

CROSSWORD

CLUES ACROSS

- Breezed through
- Supervises interstate commerce
- Unruly group
- Backs away from
- Expression of understanding
- Have concern for
- Monetary units
- Congressman (abbr.)
- Iranian city
- Eating houses
- 2,000 lbs.
- Grandmother
- They include North, South and Central
- In an early way
- Foes
- Shuttered British entertainment magazine
- One who unloads cages
- Another term for sesame
- Formally forbid
- Make clear
- Inaccessible
- Get through
- Ancient kingdom near Dead Sea
- Decameter

CLUES DOWN

- Sign language
- In style
- Helsinki neighborhood
- Unable to hear
- More rapid
- An idea accepted as a demonstrable truth
- In a cagy way
- Kate and Rooney are two
- Algerian port
- Community in Ladakh
- Midway between south and southeast
- Town in Galilee
- Satisfy

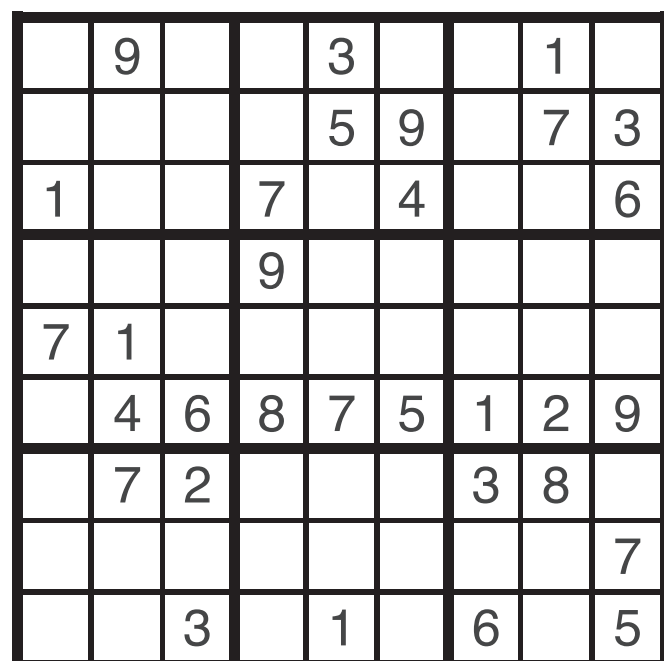
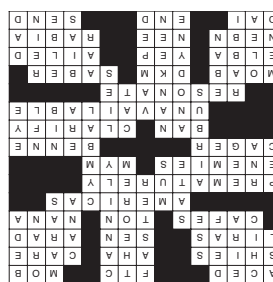
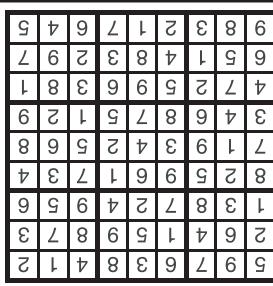
- Italian impressionist painter
- Brass instrument
- Chest muscle (slang)
- Transmits genetic information from DNA to the cytoplasm
- Records electric currents generated by the brain
- Woman (French)
- Aircraft designed to carry lots of passengers
- Baseball stat
- Pointed end of a pen
- Popular sports league
- Body part
- Unlikely to provoke dissent
- Yellowish cotton cloth
- Domesticated house pet
- Untruths
- Set out to attract
- Spiritual leader
- Abba __, Israeli politician
- Repair
- Genus of flowering plants
- Swiss river
- Prejudice
- River in central Europe
- Harness
- Father

WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to grilling.

R B G R U E

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|

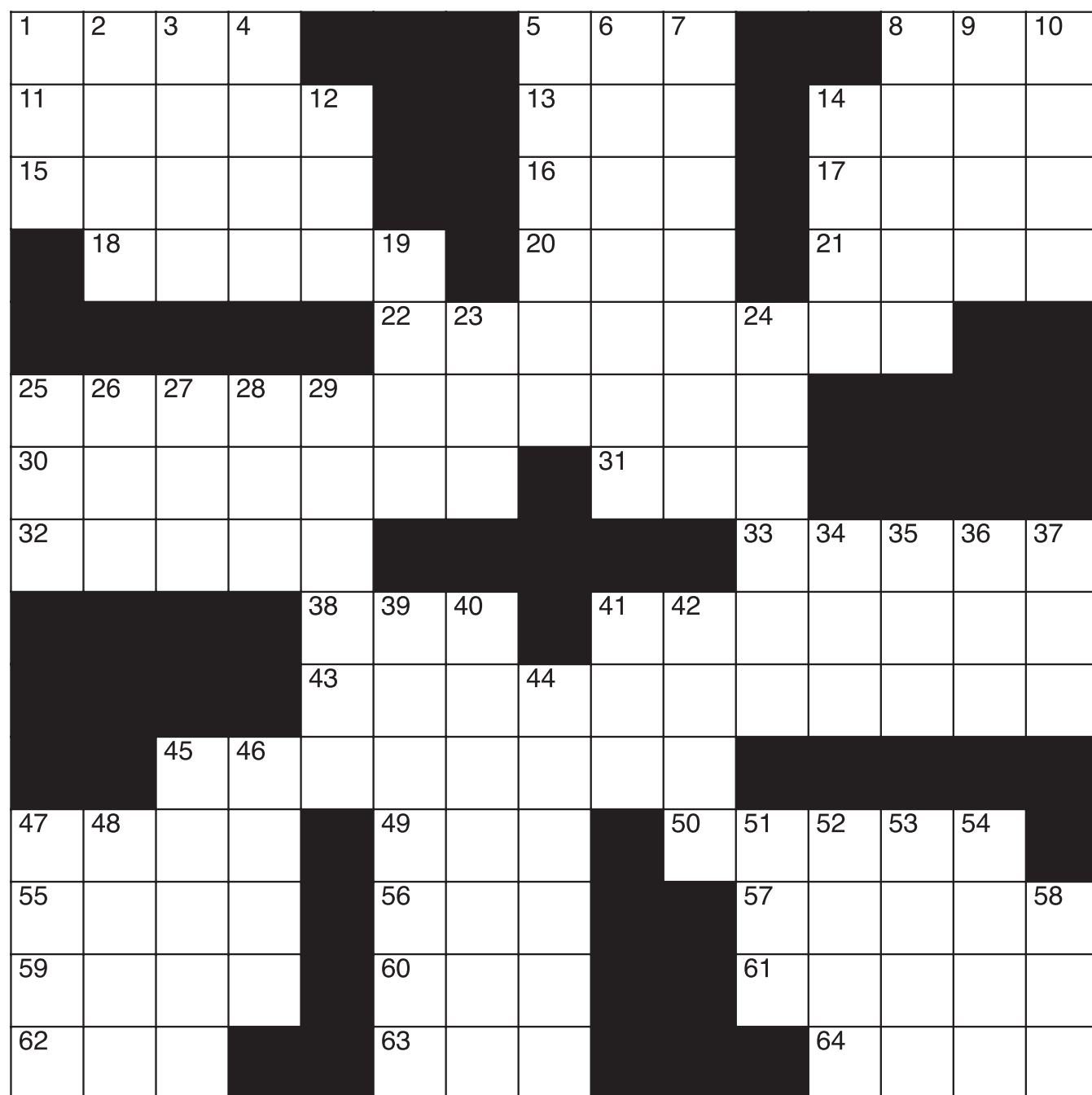
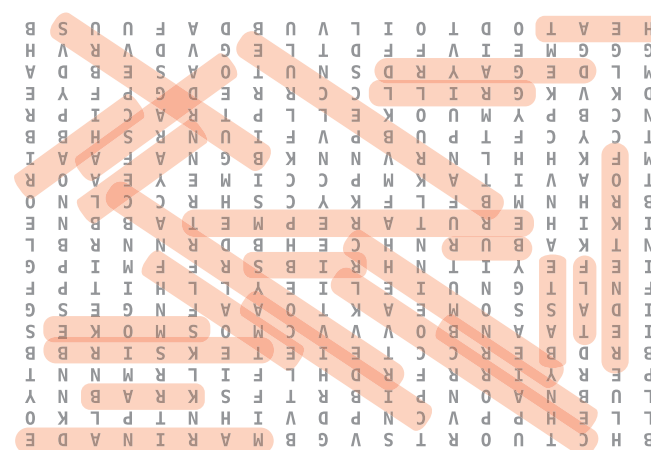


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Guess Who?

I am a singer/songwriter born in Alabama on June 20, 1949. I founded several R&B groups and also played tennis on scholarship. I co-wrote a song to help raise funds for famine in Africa. Today, I'm a judge on "American Idol."

Answer: Burger
Answer: Lionel Richie



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Published on June 20, 2024

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